

BANK OF ENGLAND FORGERIES.

The trial of the four Americans, Austin Biron Bidwell, otherwise Frederick Albert Warren, otherwise Charles Johnson Horton; George Bidwell, his brother; George Macdonnell; and Edwin Noyes Hills, otherwise Edwin Noyes, for forging and uttering bills of exchange to the amount of upwards of £100,000, with intent to defraud the Bank of England, commenced on the 18th ult. and terminated on the 26th, when all the accused were convicted, and sentenced to penal servitude for life. The case has been before the public for some time, and we have already given some account of the attendant circumstances of this extraordinary fraud—which has been characterised as the most extensive ever attempted by similar means, and probably the most elaborate.

It is not improbable that, as Macdonnell stated at the trial, the conspirators when they first came to this country had not formed any definite plan of operations. Before doing so they would naturally wait to acquire some familiarity with the course of business in England. It appears that in America it is the custom in cashing accepted bills to send round the acceptances to the persons accepting to be "initialled," and this formality being dispensed with in London suggested to the mind of Macdonnell the possibility of successful fraud. The four men came to this country in the spring of last year, and there is no doubt that they proceeded without delay to set on foot the scheme of fraud which has resulted in their ruin. Austin Bidwell procured in May an introduction to the Western Branch of the Bank of England, and for some months patiently left in deposit there, under the name of Warren, a sum of about £2,000. It was not until September that he commenced any large transactions; he then asked the manager to sell for him £8,000 of Portuguese Stock, and he drew £2,000 on account. He represented himself as an contractor for introducing Pullman's cars into Europe, and said he was building them at Birmingham. Having thus established some credit with the bank, the conspirators proceeded to acquaint themselves with the names and position of the great commercial houses of this country and of Europe. The necessary information having been got together George Bidwell, between November and January, procured a large number of genuine bills, which were paid into Warren's account, to maintain his credit; after having first been utilised as models for the intended forgeries. The scheme was now ready to be put in practice, but a further difficulty was foreseen. When the forged bills had been discounted, how was the plunder to be distributed without affording a clue by which they might all be traced? Austin Bidwell's guilt would, of course, be at once known, so it was arranged that he should leave England before the bills were presented, and an account was opened in another name at the Continental Bank, so that the money obtained on the account of Warren at the West End Branch of the Bank of England might be paid to the credit of Horton in Lombard street, and there drawn out in another form. Moreover, George Bidwell and Macdonnell, as the direct agents in the forgery, thought it prudent to shield themselves by employing a fourth agent to deal with the money. Noyes was accordingly summoned from America, and as he, too, would obviously be implicated in the crime as soon as it became known, he took the precaution of advertising for a place as clerk, and making a formal engagement with Horton, or Austin Bidwell. The design was evidently that when the forged bills matured, Macdonnell and George Bidwell should have followed Austin Bidwell abroad, that Noyes should be the only agent upon whom the authorities could lay their hands, and that he

should be able to represent himself as an innocent dupe.

To arrange for the presentation of the forged bills at the Bank of England, Austin Bidwell's imaginary factories at Birmingham were brought into play. Having one day refreshed his credit by presenting for sale a genuine bill of the Messrs. Rothschild, he informed the manager that his business at Birmingham was becoming very active, and that in the course of the next month he expected his transactions to be very large. His next communications accordingly, or rather the next communications in his name, were addressed to the manager from Birmingham. Macdonnell and George Bidwell proceeded to transmit in quick succession from Birmingham, under covers of letters purporting to be written by Austin Bidwell, the forged bills they had prepared, and by the end of the month of February forgeries to the amount of 102,217l were actually discounted at the Bank; the money was duly transferred to Horton's account, and then a further device was resorted to for the purpose of obliterating traces of the transaction. Notes were obtained from the Continental Bank; these were then taken by one of the conspirators to the Bank of England and exchanged for gold, and then, in the course of the same day, another of the conspirators took the gold back to the Bank and obtained other notes for it. The proceeds were then invested in various American securities, and large sums were actually sent to New York. Success seemed complete, when one day two bills were handed to the Bank on which the date of acceptance had, by an oversight of the forger, been omitted. The Bank, still suspecting nothing wrong, sent to the acceptor that the omission might be supplied; the forgery was discovered, and the whole scheme collapsed. Such is a sketch of one of the most skilful and audacious conspiracies to defraud ever attempted. The four men now consigned to a felon's cell for life, turned their considerable talents and business aptitude to the worst possible use, and it may be hoped that their fate will go to deter others from following in their footsteps. —*Morgan's Trade Journal.*

LIVE STOCK IN GREAT BRITAIN.—Canadian exporters of provisions will be interested in the following agricultural returns of live stock in Great Britain as at June 25th, for the last seven years:

Year.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.
1867	4,993,034	28,919,101	2,966,979
1868	5,423,981	30,711,396	2,308,539
1869	5,313,473	29,538,141	1,930,452
1870	5,403,317	28,397,589	2,171,138
1871	5,337,759	27,119,569	2,499,502
1872	5,624,994	27,921,507	2,771,749
1873	5,964,549	29,427,635	2,500,259

The number of cattle will be seen by the above to be greater this year than in any of the six years that preceded it, the return showing an increase of 339,555 when compared with 1872, that being the next largest year of the seven. 500,000 in excess of 1868 (which was the second largest year), and nearly a million more than in 1867. Sheep show an increase of 1,506,123 when compared with last year, and the present quantity has only been exceeded in two of the years—namely, in 1868 and 1869. In 1869 the excess was only about 100,000, and we have now 650,000 more cattle and 470,000 more pigs than then. Pigs show a falling off of 271,490 this year when compared with last, but in only two years out of the seven has the quantity been greater than the present one—namely, in 1867 and 1872. The following is a summary of the returns comparing 1873 with 1872. These show in Great Britain—

Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.
339,555 In.	1,506,123 In.	271,490 De.
and in Ireland—		
94,408 "	224,426 "	341,168 "
Totals..433,963 "	1,730,549 "	612,658 "

If the above returns were valued at the low rates fixed by the Irish Statistical Society, the increase would be found to be nearly four millions sterling.

Commercial.

MONTREAL MARKET.

From our own Reporter.

MONTREAL, October 7, 1873.

Our wholesale markets have ruled rather quiet this week, the stringency in the money market has tended to check business to some extent, and the ungenial and disagreeable weather which has prevailed has no doubt had its influence in trade. Dry goods has been quiet, but some extra activity is now looked for since the change of gauge on the G. T. R., as many buyers were waiting till that was accomplished before purchasing in case their goods should be detained. In groceries a moderate business has been done, and prices of some articles are easier. Hardware is firmer. Drugs and chemicals are quiet but firm. Breadstuffs more active and firmer. Provisions quiet and easier. Ashes lower. In freights lower rates have ruled, but there is some firmness exhibited owing to the limited supply of tonnage, the fall fleet is late coming into port, and is not expected to be so large as usual.

The weather has been very wet and boisterous all week, and a good deal of thunder has passed over this region. This morning cloudy but fair with cold frosty air.

ASHES.—*Pots.*—A moderate demand existed all the week for firsts, and a fair amount changed hands. Our closing quotations of last week were barely maintained, the ruling quotations being \$6.15 to 6.00, latterly a firmer feeling showed itself and sales were made at \$6.12½ to 6.15; seconds sold at \$5.30; thirds are nominal. *Pearls.*—Very little has been doing in pearls, a few barrels of first changed hands early in the week at \$7.10, but holders would not sell at anything like this price. Yesterday a healthier feeling prevailed and some were reported at \$8.10 to 8.12½. Nothing doing in inferior kinds. The stocks at present in store are pots 1552 brls; pearls 795 brls.

BOOTS AND SHOES.—We have no change to make in quotations, a moderate business has been doing, and manufacturers are filling orders as fast as possible.

CATTLE.—Market supplied pretty well just now, for which the demand is about equal, the arrivals being chiefly by boats, but it is expected that the supply by rail will again soon come in. Prices are about as follows for 1st quality \$7.00; 2nd quality \$5.00 to 6.00; 3rd quality \$4.00 to 5.00. *Sheep* are in demand at \$3.00 to 6.00. *Lambs* \$2.00 to 3.25. *Hogs* meet with fair enquiry at \$5.25 to 5.75.

DRUGS AND CHEMICALS.—Market generally quiet, but prices are firm and in some instances advanced. *Caustic soda* is steady at 5 to 5½c; *Sal soda* 1½ to 2c; *Soda ash* easier, sales from 2½ to 2½c. *Bi carb.*—The market for this article is firm owing to the advance in England. Sales to a moderate extent have been made from \$5.60 to 5.75, but holders are now asking \$5.75 to 6. *Bleaching powder* 2½ to 2½c; *Saltpetre* \$9.75 to 10.00; *Alum* easier 2 to 2½c; *Refined Borax* 28 to 30c; *Cream Tartar crystals* 28 to 30c. Other articles in this line show no particular change.

DRY GOODS.—The chief part of the seasons business is now over, but a number of buyers who delayed purchasing till after the change of